

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the abstract as follows:

A distance sensor has a capacitive element in turn having a first plate which is positioned facing a second plate whose distance is to be measured. In the case of fingerprinting, the second plate is defined directly by the skin surface of the finger being printed. The sensor includes comprises an inverting amplifier, between the input and output of which the capacitive element is connected to form a negative feedback branch. By supplying an electric charge step to the input of the inverting amplifier, a voltage step directly proportional to the distance being measured is obtained at the output.